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# Waste Tire Program Fast Facts

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Solid Waste Management Program fact sheet

5/2004

An environment free of waste tires is important to the public health of all Missouri citizens. The following are a few facts about the waste tires in Missouri.

- The Waste Tire fee was established in 1990 to address illegal waste tire dumps across Missouri.
- The Waste Tire Fee expired Jan. 1, 2004.
- The department's Waste Tire program was funded by a 50-cent-per-tire fee paid when purchasing new tires.
- Five million waste tires were generated and properly managed in Missouri each year due to the department's inspection and enforcement activities.
- With the waste tire fund the department collected and properly disposed of or recycled more than 12 million waste tires from illegal dumps, normally at a rate of 1.5 to 2 million waste tires per year.
- The waste tire fund also reimbursed nonprofit organizations for cleaning up waste tires.
- With the waste tire fund the department awarded 259 grants to communities, totaling \$1.3 million, for recycled rubber playground surfaces.
- The department estimates 2.9 million waste tires remain in known illegal dumps.
- The department also estimates at least 1 million waste tires yet to be discovered.
- When waste tires are not disposed or recycled properly they pose serious threats to human health and the environment.
- Water in waste tires creates an ideal breeding habitat for mosquitoes, increasing the threat of the West Nile virus.
- Each tire can produce 10,000 to 1 million mosquitoes during a breeding season.
- In 2002, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services verified 168 cases and seven deaths from the West Nile virus in humans.
- Fires from waste tires release hazardous substances into the air, contaminating surface and groundwater sources and can burn for months or even years.
- Missourians benefit from waste tires when disposed or recycled properly by providing:
  - an alternate source of fuel;
  - raw material for new tires;
  - playground surfaces; and
  - other recycled rubber products.
- The department's waste tire program was one of the top 10 in the nation.



- Recognized by the Council of State Governments for its cooperative cleanup efforts with the Missouri Department of Corrections and the University of Missouri-Columbia.
- The Waste Tire Fee was not extended during the 2003 and 2004 legislative sessions.
- When similar fees expired in other states dumping increased.

**For more information**

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Solid Waste Management Program  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
1-800-361-4827 or (573) 751-5401 office  
(573) 526-3902 fax  
[www.dnr.mo.gov/alpd/swmp](http://www.dnr.mo.gov/alpd/swmp)